

REMARKS

Claims 1-18 are currently pending in the present patent application. Claims 1, 2, 6, 7, 10, 12, 13, and 15 have been amended. No new matter has been added by these amendments, since the changes are in accordance with the very kind suggestions of the Examiner, and claim 6 has been amended to conform with the language of page 8, lines 5-11, of the subject Specification, as originally filed.

In the subject Office Action, the Examiner Claim 1 was objected to because of the following informalities: (1) in paragraph (a), line 3, "the long dimension" should be "a long dimension"; (2) in paragraph (c), line 4, "the region" should be "a region", and "a portion" should be "a digit-engaging portion"; (3) in paragraph (c), line 7, "the region" should be "a region"; and (4) in paragraph (d), line 1, "interior slot" should be "interior elongated slot".

Claim 2 was objected to because of the following informalities: (1) in line 3, "least one" should be "a"; (2) in line 5, "at least one" should be "a"; and (3) in lines 6 and 8, "at least one" should be deleted.

Claim 7 was objected to because of the following informalities: (1) in paragraph (a), line 4, "over the" should be "over a"; (2) in paragraph (a), line 6, "said handle" should be "said elongated handle", and "member" should be deleted; (3) in paragraph (a), line 7, "at least one" should be "a"; (4) in paragraph (a), line 14, "the second side" should be "the first side"; (5) in paragraph (c), line 3, "the region" should be "a region"; and (6) in paragraph (c), line 4 "portion" should be "digit-engaging portion".

Claim 10 was objected to because of the following informalities: in lines 5 and 8, "first cavity" should be "elongated cavity".

Claim 12 was objected to because of the following informalities: (1) in paragraph (a), line 2, "the long" should be "a long"; (2) in paragraph (c), line 3, "the region" should be "a region"; (3) in paragraph (c), line 4, "portion" should be "digit engaging portion"; and (4) in paragraph (c), line 6, "the region" should be "a region".

Claim 13 is objected to because of the following informality: in line 4, "the interior slot" should be "the interior elongated slot".

Claim 15 was objected to because of the following informalities: (1) in line 2, "at least one" should be "a"; and (2) in line 4, "at least one" should be "the".

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for having carefully reviewed the subject patent application and for identifying the above typographical errors. Applicants have made the indicated corrections, plus a few others in accordance with the Examiner's suggestions, but having been missed by the Examiner. No new matter has been added by these changes.

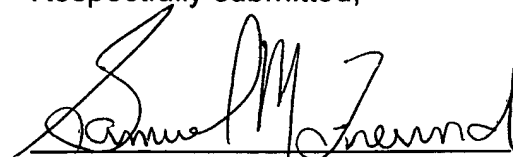
The Examiner continued by rejecting claims 1-18 under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, because the specification, while being enabling for the "in the rearward position," does not reasonably provide for a tab engaging and reversibly immobilizing the slide when the slide is located in its rearward most position. The Examiner concluded that the specification does not enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to use or make the invention commensurate in scope with these claims, since there is no disclosure as to how the tab engages and reversibly immobilizes the slide. Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner concerning this ground of rejection, and wish to direct the Examiner's attention to page 7, lines 26-30, of the subject Specification, as originally filed, for a description of tab **42**, which wedges slide **16** firmly within handle cavity **82**. This tab is also shown in FIG. 1 of the subject Specification, as originally filed.

Claim 6 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicants regard as their invention, since the Examiner asserted that the Specification does not disclose a thickness range for the first side. Applicants have amended claim 6 to conform with the disclosure on page 8, lines 5-11, of the subject Specification, as originally filed, wherein applicants functionally describe the shape and thickness of the relieved portion **76** of the handle in the region of the access window. Applicants believe that a person having ordinary skill in the art would be capable of determining the appropriate thickness and shape to satisfy the criteria that an operator can readily engage the digit-engaging portion **44** of slide **16**,

while not being able to accidentally release latch **46** during use of the instrument, without undue experimentation.

For these reasons, applicants believe that claims 1-18, as amended, are in condition for allowance, and such action by the Examiner at an early date is earnestly solicited. Reexamination and reconsideration are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,


Signature of Attorney

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